United Nations A/ES-10/479 S/2010/122

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
5 March 2010

Original: English

General Assembly
Tenth emergency special session
Agenda item 5
Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-fifth year

Identical letters dated 5 March 2010 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

In follow-up to my letter of two days ago and recent letters regarding the critical situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, I regret to inform you that tensions have continued to rise, resulting in greater unrest and instability on the ground. This deterioration is clearly linked to the continuous aggravation and inflammation of the situation by Israel, the occupying Power, and its illegal practices, provocations and incitement against the Palestinian people throughout the Occupied Territory. If left unaddressed, this fragile situation will surely lead to further destabilization, with vastly negative repercussions in the area as well as in the region.

Today, in a clear indication of rising frustrations and tensions, the holy Al-aram Al-Sharif compound in Occupied East Jerusalem regrettably once again witnessed turmoil. Following the Friday prayers at Al-Aqsa Mosque, Israeli occupying forces stormed the compound, firing tear gas, rubber-coated bullets and stun grenades at Palestinian men, women and youth that had been worshipping there. Further provoked by the intense presence of the Israeli occupying forces in this sacred area, clashes erupted between the occupying forces and the Palestinian worshippers at the compound and in other places in the Old City. In this regard, it is imperative to bear in mind the heightened religious sensitivities and anger prevailing due to repeated Israeli illegal attempts to alter the character, composition and status of the Palestinian Territory, particularly in East Jerusalem, and to control holy sites, as indicated by the recent Israeli declarations regarding holy sites in Al-Khalil (Hebron) and Bethlehem.

Dozens of Palestinians were injured by the occupying forces today in East Jerusalem, with reports that at least 60 people may have suffered injuries, including one Palestinian woman who was shot in the head with a rubber bullet and is currently hospitalized in serious condition. At the same time, witnesses report that

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the Israeli occupying forces even prevented Palestine Red Crescent medics from reaching and treating the many who were injured during this outbreak of violence.

Such escalating tensions were also evident today in other areas throughout the Occupied West Bank, indicating the truly detrimental and inflammatory impact of recent provocative and illegal Israeli actions. This included attempts by the Israeli occupying forces to confront Palestinian demonstrators in Al-Khalil (Hebron), including outside Al-Haram Al-Ibrahimi as well as attacks by the occupying forces on Palestinian civilians demonstrating in the village of Bil'in, west of Ramallah. In Bil'in, as the civilians marched peacefully from the centre of the village towards the Wall, the occupying troops fired tear gas, rubber bullets and sound bombs at the crowd, instigating clashes, and also fired tear gas directly at journalists and television crews at the scene, clearly aimed at obstructing reporting of the violence being perpetrated by the Israeli occupying forces against the civilian demonstrators.

All of these incidents are indications of the increasing tumult and instability being caused by deliberate, relentless and illegal Israeli actions against Palestinian civilians, their lands, their properties and their heritage in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly in and around East Jerusalem and other holy sites. Once again, we alert the international community to the dangers of the further escalation of the situation. This requires immediate attention because, clearly, if permitted to continue acting with such impunity, Israel's aggressive and illegal actions threaten to ignite yet another devastating cycle of violence and loss that will drag us farther and farther away from the peace and stability we seek.

At this particular moment in time, when concerted efforts are being exerted by the international community to salvage the prospects for peace, including by the United States of America in its efforts to restart peace negotiations, it is obvious that the continuation of such unlawful and provocative Israeli behaviour will render any and all efforts null. In this regard, it must be stated that all recent illegal and provocative Israeli measures further seriously call into question Israel's genuineness and credibility as a peace partner.

We thus reiterate our call on the international community, including the Security Council, to uphold their responsibilities under the Charter, international law, including international humanitarian law and human rights law, and the relevant United Nations resolutions to compel Israel to cease all illegal policies and measures in order to stem the deterioration of the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to promote a climate truly conducive to the pursuit of peace.

This letter is in follow-up to our previous 358 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, since 28 September 2000. Those letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 3 March 2010 (A/ES-10/478-S/2010/119) constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations